What is claimed is:

1. A method for customizing nodes of a network diagram comprising the steps of:

displaying one or more options for modifying one or more physical characteristics of nodes within a network diagram;

displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data that is contained within respective nodes within a network diagram;

selecting one or more of the options;

displaying a preview in response to selecting the options; and

applying the selected options to one or more nodes in a network diagram.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

listing one or more categories of nodes for a network diagram; and

associating the selected options with corresponding categories of nodes.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

selecting one or more nodes within a network diagram;

applying the selected options to only the selected one or more nodes within the network diagram.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the preview step further comprises the step of displaying data from a particular node within a network diagram.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more physical characteristics further comprises the step of listing options for any one of border shape, border width, border color, background color, and fill pattern for nodes.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data further comprises the step of listing one or more predefined templates.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data further comprises the step of obtaining user defined data templates.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data further comprises the step of listing options for identifying names of data fields to be displayed within a respective node.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data further comprises the step of listing options for adjusting the size of a data grid for respective nodes within a network diagram.

10. A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 1.

11. A method for highlighting categories of nodes within a network diagram comprising the steps of:

displaying an indicator that shows a highlight filter is activated;

listing one or more categories of nodes for a network diagram;

displaying one or more options for modifying one or more physical characteristics of nodes within a network diagram;

displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data that is contained within respective nodes within a network diagram;

selecting one or more of the options;

associating the selected options with corresponding categories of nodes;

displaying a highlight filter preview in response to selecting the options; and

applying the selected options to one or more nodes in a network diagram.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the highlight filter preview step further comprises the step of displaying data from a particular node within a network diagram.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more physical characteristics further comprises the step of listing options for any one of border shape, border width, border color, background color, and fill pattern for highlighted nodes.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of displaying one or more options for modifying one or more characteristics of data further comprises the step of listing one or more predefined templates.

15. A method for generating a network diagram with nodes at different magnification levels comprising the steps of:

displaying one or more nodes of a network diagram;

determining whether a mouse pointer is positioned in a predefined region containing a node;

determining whether node data is visible to a user;

in response to a mouse pointer intersecting the predefined region, displaying one or more of the nodes at a different magnification level relative to other nodes in a network diagram; and

in response to a mouse pointer leaving the predefined region, displaying the one or more nodes at a magnification level that is substantially the same for nodes within the network diagram that are not traversed by the mouse pointer .

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of determining whether node data is visible to a user further comprises the step of determining if a zoom factor is less than a predetermined threshold.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of determining whether node data is visible to a user further comprises the step of determining if a predetermined layout has been selected for a network diagram.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of displaying one or more nodes at a different magnification level relative to other nodes in a network diagram further comprises the step of displaying the one or more nodes at an increased magnification level relative to the other nodes within the network diagram.